

B. POPULATION, EMPLOYMENT, AND HOUSING

This section describes the local area's existing and projected population, employment and housing characteristics and evaluates the North Park Street Code in terms of potential impacts on population, employment and/or housing.

1. SETTING

The following setting information is based on population and job growth projections prepared by the U.S. Census Bureau (Census), Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG), and the City of Alameda.

a. Population

The City of Alameda is a mature, island city with limited developable land remaining within its boundaries. During World War II, the City had an all-time high population of 89,000, when NAS Alameda operated around the clock. The City added an average of 300 homes per year between 1970 and 1990, mainly on Bay Farm Island.

Between 1990 and 2000, the City lost approximately 1,720 residents from its total population, a decrease of approximately 2 percent due to the departure of military personnel and related service industry jobs with the closure of NAS Alameda. Between 2000 and 2010 the City of Alameda population increased from 72,259 persons to approximately 73,812 persons. By 2030, ABAG projects that the City of Alameda will have a population of approximately 86,000.¹

Between 1990 and 2000, the number of households in the City of Alameda decreased by 1,148, or by less than 4 percent when compared to the 1990 base of 29,078 households.² Between 2000 and 2010, the number of households is estimated to have held relatively stable or even may have decreased from 30,226 households 2000 to approximately 29,851 households estimated by the Census Bureau in 2008. When available, the 2010 Census information on households will confirm whether the city of Alameda actually saw an increase in vacancies and a decrease in total households over the last decade. The number of households is projected by ABAG to increase through 2030, when they are projected to reach approximately 34,000.

b. Housing

According to the 2010 Census, there were 31,644 housing units in the City of Alameda in 2000.³ Of these, about 40 percent were detached single-family units, 10 percent were attached single-family units, and 50 percent were multi-family units. By 2010, the number of housing units had increased to 32,351.

¹ Association of Bay Area Governments. *Projections 2009 - Forecasts for the San Francisco Bay Area to the Year 2025*. December.

² Ibid.

³ U.S. Census Bureau, 2000.

c. Employment

During the early 1990s, the City of Alameda experienced a substantial decrease in overall employment as a result of the closure of NAS Alameda and associated facilities. The U.S. Navy installations at full operations in 1990 employed nearly 6,000 civilians and 12,800 military personnel (including reserves), for total NAS Alameda/FISC Facility employment of approximately 18,800. The majority of these jobs were in blue-collar occupations. Between 1990 and 1995, the City of Alameda lost 5,640 jobs, or nearly the level of civilian employment associated with NAS Alameda and the Fleet Industrial Supply Center (FISC) Facility. This drop represented a 17 percent job loss for the City as a whole. Between 1995 and 2000, the City lost another 5,930 jobs. The total loss in jobs from 1990 to 2000 was approximately 30 percent of the 1990 jobs total. In 2000, it is estimated that Alameda had approximately 27,384 total jobs. Current estimates by ABAG and the Census Bureau (2008) indicate that the total number of jobs in Alameda has increased by about 100 jobs over the last decade for a total of about 27,400 in 2008.

Due primarily to the departure of the Navy, between 1990 and 2000, the City of Alameda lost 8,084 employed residents, or approximately 19 percent of the 1990 total. By 2009, the Census Bureau estimated that Alameda has approximately 57,245 employed residents over 16 years of age.

ABAG projects that Alameda will experience substantial job growth over the next 20 years resulting in a total of approximately 40,000 jobs by 2030.

(2) Jobs/Housing Balance

Jobs/housing balance is defined as the ratio of the number of jobs to the number of housing units in a given area. Although the term “jobs/housing balance” is still often used, the more precise relationship is between jobs and the number of employed residents (because some households have no workers, while others have multiple workers). Jobs and housing are said to be balanced when there are an equal number of employed residents and jobs within a given area, generating a ratio of approximately 1.0. An area that has too many jobs relative to its housing supply is likely to experience rising housing costs and declining affordability. If an area has too few jobs relative to its housing supply, this may be an indication that residents are commuting elsewhere to work. Environmental effects of this imbalance may include traffic congestion and adverse impacts on air quality.

However, a balance between jobs and housing in a given place may still not be an accurate indicator of commuting rates. For instance, an area with a jobs/housing ratio of 1.0, but with little affordable housing may host a large day population of workers commuting from areas with more affordable housing. Thus jobs/housing evaluations are more useful in examining the *potential* for “self-containment”: the ability of an area’s population to live and work in the same place. Because of the tendency of people to commute, potential for self-containment is best understood at the sub-regional level.

The City of Alameda currently has more employed residents than jobs. This condition indicates that many of Alameda’s employed residents commute to work outside of the City. The ratio of jobs to employed residents within the City of Alameda was about 0.87 in 1990.⁴ With the loss of jobs due to the departure of the Navy and the 2007 recession, the “jobs housing balance” ratio dropped to approximately to 0.53 in 2008/2010.

2. IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

The following section provides a discussion of both less-than-significant and potentially significant impacts related to population and housing that could result from implementation of the North Park Street Code.

a. Significance Criteria

The proposed North Park Street Code would have a significant impact on population and housing if it would:

- Result in substantial population or housing growth or concentration of population, either directly (by proposing new homes or businesses) or indirectly (through extension of roads or other infrastructure);
- Displace a substantial number of people or existing housing, especially affordable (very low, low, and moderate income) housing units, necessitating the construction of replacement units elsewhere; or
- Create a substantial imbalance between jobs and housing through direct physical impacts to housing.

b. Less-than-Significant Impacts

(1) Induce Substantial Unanticipated Population or Housing Growth

Implementation of the North Park Street Code over its planning horizon would result in the addition of approximately 200 households. Based on an average projected household size of 2.35 persons, the additional households would increase the City’s population by approximately 470 persons.

This population growth is well within the growth rate envisioned in the General Plan for this area and established by ABAG for the City over the next 20 years. Therefore, the North Park Street Code would not result in substantial direct population or housing growth. In addition, the growth constitutes infill development, since the North Park Street plan area is located entirely within a developed urban area. Implementation of the North Park Street Code would not result in the extension of new roads and infrastructure into an undeveloped area; therefore, the North Park Street Code would not result in indirect population growth. In addition, infill development in existing

⁴ Association of Bay Area Governments. Op. cit.

urban areas has been demonstrated by regional planning and transportation professionals to be an environmentally sound means of accommodating regional economic development and housing. Infill development allows for efficient utilization of land and infrastructure, as opposed to the development of open space and agricultural land at the periphery of existing urban areas.

(2) Displace Population or Housing

Implementation of the proposed North Park Street Code would not displace persons or displace or destroy housing located within the North Park Street Code area.

(3) Jobs/Housing Balance

The Park Street Code provided for mixed use development and allows for the addition of commercial, job generating uses as well as residential uses within easy walking distance of existing transit and retail services. The Code would result in the construction of housing in a region that continues to experience a substantial housing shortage, and would not adversely impact the future projected jobs/housing imbalance.

(4) Potential Effect on the Affordability of Housing

The number and type of housing units proposed as part of the North Park Street Code is well within ABAG's Regional Housing Needs Determination for the City.

c. Significant Impacts

Implementation of the North Park Street Code would not result in any significant adverse population and housing related impacts.